

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the ancestor application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

providing a program guide of television programming to enable a customer to create a custom channel by selecting at least one television program from the program guide and by specifying a viewing time for the selected program;

receiving input from the customer including the selected program and the specified viewing time;

determining whether to include the selected program in the custom channel;

obtaining programs for the custom channel; and

transmitting to the customer the custom channel created by the customer;

determining whether to include the selected program in the custom channel
includes:

determining whether the selected program conflicts in viewing time with a
program previously added to the custom channel;

if the selected program conflicts in viewing time with the previously
added program,

adding the selected program to the custom channel if it is
determined to record the selected program or the previously added
program for viewing by the customer at a different time, to provide
simultaneous access to the selected program and the previously added
program, or to delete the previously added program from the custom
channel, and otherwise

not including the selected program in the custom channel; and

adding the selected program to the custom channel if the selected program
does conflicts in viewing time with the previously added program.

2. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

allowing a customer to create more than one custom channel;
obtaining programs for the more than one custom channel; and
simultaneously transmitting to the customer the more than one custom channel.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising providing the customer at least one access code to a program in the program guide, the at least access code including an access level.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein obtaining programs for the custom channel comprises at least one of:
pre-recording a program in the custom channel if the customer desires to view the program at a later time;
requesting and obtaining a program in the custom channel from a content provider; or
generating a program in the custom channel.

6-12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein transmitting to the customer the custom channel comprises encrypting data before transmitting the custom channel to the customer.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a user interface for a customer to select programs in the program guide to be included in the custom channel.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the user interface comprises a voice-based natural language dialog system.
17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the user interface comprises a web-based user interface.
18. (Currently Amended) A system comprising:
a receiver to receive television programming from at least one provider;
a customer interface to provide a program guide of television programming to enable a customer to create a custom channel by selecting at least one television program from the program guide and by specifying a viewing time for the selected program;
a controller to determine whether to include the selected program in the custom channel, and to obtain data for the custom channel; and
a transmitter coupled to the receiver, the transmitter to transmit to the customer the custom channel created by the customer;
wherein the controller adds the selected program to the custom channel if the selected program does not conflict in viewing time with a program previously added to the custom channel, or if the selected program conflicts in viewing time with the previously added program but if it is determined to record the selected program or the previously added program for viewing by the customer at a different time, to provide simultaneous access to the selected program and the previously added program, or to delete the previously added program from the custom channel.
19. (Previously presented) The system of claim 18, further comprising a database memory to store custom channel data.
20. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 18, wherein the customer interface including one of an electronic program guide, a natural language electronic program guide, and a web-based electronic program guide.

21. (Original) The system of claim 18, further comprising a video storage medium coupled to the receiver, the video storage medium to receive and store television programming.

22. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 18, further comprising an encryption device coupled to the transmitter, the encryption device to encrypt the custom channel data prior to transmitting to the customer.

23. (Original) The system of claim 18, further comprising access circuitry coupled to the customer interface, the access circuitry to receive and verify a customer access code.

24-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 18, wherein the controller obtains data for the custom channel by at least one of:

pre-recording a program in the custom channel if the customer desires to view the program at a later time;

requesting and obtaining a program in the custom channel from a content provider; or

generating a program in the custom channel.

28. (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture, comprising:
a machine accessible medium, said machine accessible medium comprising instructions that, when executed by a machine, cause said machine to perform operations including:

providing a program guide of television programming to enable a customer to create a custom channel by selecting at least one television program from the program guide and by specifying a viewing time for the selected program;

receiving input from the customer including the selected program and the specified viewing time;

determining whether to include the selected program in the custom channel;
obtaining programs for the custom channel; and
transmitting to the customer the custom channel created by the customer;
determining whether to include the selected program in the custom channel
includes:
_____ determining whether the selected program conflicts in viewing time with a
program previously added to the custom channel;
_____ if the selected program conflicts in viewing time with the previously
added program,
_____ adding the selected program to the custom channel if it is
determined to record the selected program or the previously added
program for viewing by the customer at a different time, to provide
simultaneous access to the selected program and the previously added
program, or to delete the previously added program from the custom
channel, and otherwise
_____ not including the selected program in the custom channel; and
_____ adding the selected program to the custom channel if the selected program does
conflicts in viewing time with the previously added program.

29-31. (Cancelled)

32. (Previously presented) The article of claim 28, said operations further include:

allowing a customer to create more than one custom channel;
obtaining programs for the more than one custom channel; and
simultaneously transmitting to the customer the more than one custom channel.

33. (Cancelled)

34. (Previously Presented) The article of claim 28, wherein obtaining programs for the custom channel comprises at least one of:

- pre-recording a program in the custom channel if the customer desires to view the program at a later time;
- requesting and obtaining a program in the custom channel from a content provider; or
- generating a program in the custom channel.

35. (Previously presented) The article of claim 28, wherein transmitting to the customer the custom channel comprises encrypting data before transmitting the custom channel to the customer.

36. (Previously presented) The article of claim 28, wherein the operations further include providing a user interface for a customer to select programs in the program guide to be included in the custom channel, the user interface comprising a voice-based natural language dialog system.